AN

ESSAY,

ON THE

SYMPTOMS AND CURE

OF THE

VIRULENT GONORRHOEA,

IN

FEMALES.

BY CHARLES ARMSTRONG,

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Medicamenta naturæ corporis semper accommodanda sunt; debilibus enim debilia, et fortibus fortia conveniunt.

HOME's Princip. Med.

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PREFACE.

AMONG the numerous treatiſes, and eſſays, that have been publiſhed on the venereal diſeaſe, we have not one profeſſedly written on the appearances and cure of this diſeaſe in Females, though they are equally obnoxious with the other moiety of the creation, to the effects of venereal infection, and too often ſuffer undeſervedly, from faithleſs huſbands, and ungenerous ſeducers. In a caſe of this kind, ſhame commonly ties up the unhappy ſufferer's tongue, until the diſorder is paſt concealment. Sometimes, real ignorance of the pernicious nature of the complaint, prevents a virtuous woman from making an early application for medical aſſiſtance, while the baſe author of her misfortune, unwilling to take ſhame to himſelf, and acknowledge his guilt, (which is ſurely of the greateſt magnitude) ſuffers the diſeaſe to proceed unreſtrained, to the inevitable deſtruction of the conſtitution, and, perhaps, the fame of the miſerable victim.

It may poſſibly be urged, that a general treatiſe on the lues venerea, contains every thing requiſite to be known, concerning the ſymptoms, and method of cure, in both ſexes, and that this little work is unneceſſarily obtruded on the public. To this charge, I anſwer, that the beſt authors on the venereal diſeaſe, have not deſcribed its appearances in females with ſufficient preciſion; generally contenting themſelves with barely mentioning

tioning a very few of the ſymptoms; and if they have touched on the method of cure, it has been in ſuch general or ambiguous terms, as to afford little ſatisfaction to thoſe who ſtand moſt in need of inſtruction. I may alſo add, that, as the female organs of generation differ from thoſe belonging to the other ſex, ſo do the venereal ſymptoms, affecting thoſe organs, vary from the appearance they aſſume in males. But this diſtinction being moſt eſſential in what is called the firſt ſtage of the diſeaſe, I ſhall confine myſelf to the conſideration of that only.

As my intention is purely to put a compendious account of the appearance and treatment of the female gonorrhœa, into the hands of the junior branches of the profeſſion, who, in general, have but obſcure ideas of thoſe matters, I ſhall convey my ſentiments in as few words as poſſible, and avoid entering into theoretical diſquiſitions, which have a greater tendency to miſlead than to convey any uſeful information.

Qui ſpeculentur non medentur.

Some of the obſervations may be thought new, but others muſt unavoidably be ſuch as are to be found elſewhere; however, I ſubmit the whole, on a firm aſſurance that it is founded on reaſon and experience.

Great Ruſſel-Street, Bloomſbury,
Dec. 28, 1782.

AN

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ESSAY,

ON THE

VIRULENT GONORRHOEA,

IN

FEMALES.

THE virulent gonorrhœa, is generally the fruit of impure venery. The virus ejected with the ſemen, from the penis of an infected man in coition, is received into the ſuperior part of the vagina of the woman; but this is rarely the ſeat of infection, by reaſon of the ſmoothneſs of its ſurface; the ejected liquor ſpontaneouſly deſcending towards the entrance of the paſſage, where the

vagina is wrinkled, and furniſhed with innumerable ſebaceous glandules proper to receive, and retain, the venereal virus; part of which lodging, in a ſhort time produces a gonorrhœa. But inſtances are not wanting, of females being infected ſine coitu. I have a patient, juſt recovered from one of the worſt gonorrhœas I ever ſaw, who never admitted the embraces of any man. She was diſeaſed by the brutal attempts of an infected ſavage. Hildanus relates a caſe to this effect, though he accounts differently for the infection. A young lady of a lively diſpoſition, with ſome ſprightly female companions, took it into their heads to exchange dreſſes with ſome young men of their acquaintance. In a ſhort time, Hildanus's patient felt great pain and inflammation about the pudenda, which was ſoon overſpread with chancres. The diſeaſe proceeded rapidly, and put a period to her exiſtence, after ſhe had ſuffered the moſt excru-

excruciating torments. This unfortunate young lady affirmed to the laſt, ſhe had never had any criminal connexion. The perſon whoſe clothes ſhe had worn was found to be diſeaſed, from which Hildanus concluded, that ſome part of the perſpirable matter of the infected man, conveyed in the clothes, was abſorbed by the lady, and that way produced the diſeaſe. But it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that a young man and woman, in a merry mood, would ſhift habits without ſtepping a little beyond the pale of decency, and, conſequently, 'tis natural to imagine there was a more direct communication of the venereal virus from the gentleman, to the pudenda of the lady, yet without any penetration of the vagina.

I have lately, among the lower claſs of people, met with ſeveral inſtances of female infants labouring under virulent gonorrhœas, with violent inflammation, heat of urine, and ulceration, from re-

cent infections: ſome of which, I took great pains to trace up to the ſource, in order to aſcertain whether the caſes were venereal or not. The reſult of my enquiries conſtantly amounted to this, that a diſeaſed wretch frequented or lodged in the houſe, who, poſſeſſing the vulgar belief that the diſorder would quit him, could he communicate it to a virgin, had taken an opportunity of applying his infected part, to the privities of the child.

From the preceding account of the uſual means by which venereal infection is communicated to females, it is clearly evident, that an early and careful ablution of the external parts, and vagina, after coition with a diſeaſed man, will commonly waſh away the poiſon before any part of it is imbibed, and, of courſe, prevent the diſagreeable conſequences that were likely to enſue. Brandy and water, wine and water, or a mix-

a mixture of honey, vinegar, and water, may be ſafely uſed for this purpoſe; but the ſureſt prophylactic, is an injection and waſh that will unite with the mucus of the vagina, increaſe its diſcharge, and bring it away, together with the venereal virus that is blended with it. Great care muſt be taken in the preparation and uſe of a remedy of this kind, for, if it be too weak, it may probably fail in its effect; and if it be too ſtrong, it may excoriate the part, and produce violent inflammation: thus the remedy (as it is called) may prove a greater evil, than the diſeaſe it is deſigned to prevent.

The venereal virus poſſeſſes different degrees of activity. In ſome inſtances, it is ſo very acrid, as to erode the parts in three or four days, and produce a bloody diſcharge; on the other hand, it has often lain dormant for upwards of a month. Theoriſts have never yet

given any ſatisfactory account of the nature of this virus; why ſome are infected, when others, equally in danger, eſcape? why it makes a rapid progreſs in one inſtance, and proceeds ſlowly in another? or why it ſometimes conceals itſelf for a conſiderable ſpace of time?

The virulent gonorrhœa in females, is a morbid diſcharge of an infectious coloured fluid from the vagina, which commonly appears within ten days after impure coition. The firſt ſymptom is a troubleſome itching in the pudenda, with an unuſual ſenſation of heat; then a whitiſh glairy matter begins to diſtil from the vagina, and on making water, a titillation is perceived about the meatus urinarius, which uſually increaſes gradually to a painful degree of ſcalding.

As the diſorder advances, the diſcharge becomes more copious, opake,

purulent, and yellow. The heat of urine increaſes. The internal part of the labia, the nymphæ, the clitoris, and particularly the meatus urinarius, become inflamed, ſwelled, and extremely painful to the touch.

All theſe ſymptoms are much more intenſe when the diſeaſe has reached its acmè. The complexion fades, and the eyes loſe their brightneſs. The urine is frequently mixed with blood, and voided guttatim with exquiſite pain, the ardor being ſo great, that though the patient feels a continual inclination to make water, ſhe dreads the attempt. The conſtant anguiſh in the inflamed parts, deprives the patient of reſt; and the pain and irritation extending up the vagina, produce a forcing, or bearing down of the uterus. If the diſorder be highly virulent, the diſcharge aſſumes a greeniſh caſt, or appears like a bloody

ſanies; and, ſometimes, pure blood is diſcharged.

By neglect, improper treatment, or a continued courſe of venery, many painful and dangerous ſymptoms may yet ſucceed. On the contrary, if the patient will be early in her application for medical aſſiſtance, and is ſo fortunate to make choice of a judicious phyſician or ſurgeon, the diſorder will rarely attain the height already deſcribed, but will gradually wear away. The countenance, which was before pale, and wan, will again reſume its florid, or natural hue. The ardor urinæ, and inflammation, with the conſequent pain and irritation, will be removed. The diſcharge will likewiſe decreaſe, become paler, and, at length, wholly diſappear.

Although the gonorrhœa in women commonly purſues a courſe ſimilar to that

that already related, yet there are ſeveral variations from the common train of ſymptoms, in conſequence of the virus having taken a particular ſeat in the ſinus muliebre. Theſe deviations make it neceſſary, for the ſake of diſtinction, to divide the female gonorrhœa into three ſpecies; of which, the two firſt are by far the moſt frequent. Some authors have mentioned a fourth ſpecies of female gonorrhæa, but as it is only a malignant degree of the firſt ſpecies, and the diſtinction too inconſiderable to require a ſeparate conſideration, I ſhall include it under that head. Each ſpecies requires, in ſome meaſure a different mode of treatment.

In order to convey a clear idea of the ſeat of each ſpecies of the female gonorrhœa, it may not be improper to give a brief deſcription of the parts principally affected, previous to entering

ing on the detail of ſymptoms peculiar to each ſpecies.

THE FIRST SPECIES OF FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

THE mons veneris, is an eminence cauſed by a particular thickening of the adipoſe membrane. It is covered with hair, and ſituated at the upper and fore-part of the oſſa pubis, immediately above the rima magna; on each ſide of which deſcend the labia, furniſhed on the outſide like the mons veneris. The inner ſide of each labium is pierced by a great number of pores, which are the excretory ducts of as many glandules that furniſh a ſebaceous matter.

The clitoris, with its præputium, is found between the labia, on the middle and fore-part of the pubes. This is a part

part extremely ſenſible, and, like the penis in the male, is compoſed of two cavernous bodies, ariſing in like manner diſtinctly from the ſame bones, and afterwards conjoining together into one body, with the intervention of a ſeptum, but without including any urethra.

Within the labia are placed two cutaneous appendages, called nymphæ, which are of a cellular diſtenſible fabric, intermixed with ſebaceous glands. Theſe productions deſcending outwards and downwards from the cutis of the clitoris, form the rima magna.

The vagina is a membranous cavity, eaſily dilatable, ſituated below the urethra, and above the rectum. It is four or five inches long, and between one and two in breadth; its inner or poſterior extremity ſurrounds the orifice of the uterus, and is connected with it. The inner ſurface of the vagina is formed

into

into rugæ, between which are placed ſmall glands, whoſe excretory ducts opening into the cavity are called lacunæ. Theſe glands furniſh a mucus to lubricate the vagina, and are the chief ſeat of the firſt ſpecies of female gonorrhœa.

Juſt at the entrance of the vagina are placed the carunculæ myrtiformes. Theſe are partly the ſhattered remains of what formerly compoſed the hymen, and are two, three, or four in number.

The firſt ſpecies of female gonorrhœa, is, when the virus adheres to the inſide of the labia, to the nymphæ, or to the cavity of the vagina, which is the moſt uſual ſeat of the diſeaſe, and is often the only part affected. The ſtimulus cauſed by the detention of the venereal poiſon, ſoon occaſions an increaſed ſecretion of mucus, which is commonly of a yellowiſh caſt, and diſcharged in great

great abundance. A difficulty of urine ſeldom accompanies this ſpecies of gonorrhœa, but ulcers are ſometimes produced in the vagina, which emit a thin virulent matter, that ſeldom fails to taint thoſe who put themſelves in its way.

This ſpecies of the diſeaſe, but more eſpecially the milder diviſion of it, is not infrequently taken for the fluor albus, which is a complaint women are very liable to: and as the fair-ſex are always unwilling to think themſelves injured by their greateſt favourites, and often give ſtrange accounts of their complaints, practitioners may ſometimes be deceived in caſes of this kind. There are however ſome circumſtances, which properly attended to, will enable us to pronounce with a degree of certainty, whether the caſe be venereal, or not. The fluor albus is conſtantly accompanied with weakneſs, laſſitude,

loſs

loſs of appetite, pain in the loins, and ſigns of univerſal debility; which ſymptoms are never occaſioned by this ſlight ſpecies of the virulent gonorrhœa. The fluor albus in the beginning increaſes ſlowly, and continues for months in the ſame ſtate; whilſt the gonorrhœa breaks forth ſuddenly, and is much quicker in its progreſs. Beſides, the diſcharge in the fluor albus uſually ſprings from a more remote ſource than in the gonorrhœa. Theſe diſtinctions will greatly aſſiſt us in drawing a line between the two diſorders; yet, after all, it muſt be confeſſed, that the ſureſt criterion is to be attained by gaining a knowledge of the cauſe; but this, for the moſt part, is carefully concealed.

THE SECOND SPECIES OF FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

BELOW the clitoris, in the interval of the nymphæ, is placed the meatus urinarius,

narius, forming a ſmall wrinkled eminence; it is pierced by many little ducts or lacunæ, which ſupply a mucous liquor to defend the part againſt the acrimony of the urine.

The ſecond ſpecies of female gonorrhœa, is, when the glandular tubercle that forms the meatus urinarius, and the adjacent lacunæ are infected, either by themſelves, or together with the vagina. This is a very frequent and painful ſpecies of the diſeaſe. The firſt ſign is a violent itching about the meatus urinarius, which ſoon becomes painful. The meatus ſwells, and diſcharges a yellowiſh matter, either ſpontaneouſly, or when preſſed. The ſwelling keeps pace with the inflammation, and the meatus projects in a conical form. The tenſion of the part occaſions great difficulty in making water, and when it is ulcerated, the irritation

cauſed

cauſed by the ſaline particles of the urine, produces acute pain and ſcalding.

THE THIRD SPECIES OF FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

THE female urethra is a ſpongy duct like that of the male, but much ſhorter; its courſe lies directly under the trunk of the clitoris, and above the vagina, and it adheres to both. It paſſes below the oſſa pubis, and terminates by an oblique opening at the neck of the bladder. The internal ſurface of the urethra is perforated by many ſmall ducts; theſe communicate with folliculi, from which a viſcid liquor may be preſſed.

The third ſpecies of female gonorrhœa, is, when the virus has reached the urethra, where its ſtimulus ſoon brings on the ardor urinæ, which preſently increaſes to an intolerable degree of

of ſcalding. The meatus urinarius is inflamed and ſwelled, as in the ſecond ſpecies; and the irritation extending to the neck of the bladder, produces a painful ſtrangury, and the whole train of preſſing ſymptoms attendant on an inflammation of that part. Ulceration may take place in the urethra, and corrode the vagina; in which caſe a troubleſome, and perhaps incurable effuſion of urine would follow.

Having deſcribed the general courſe of the ſymptoms attending the female gonorrhœa, and enumerated the appearances peculiar to each ſpecies, I ſhall proceed to ſet forth a ſafe and effectual method of cure, firſt, as far as it relates to the general ſymptoms; and afterwards, the remedies proper for the relief of the moſt preſſing ſymptoms of each particular ſpecies.

CURE OF THE FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

IN order to cure the virulent gonorrhœa ſafely, we muſt ſubdue the effect before we think of removing the cauſe; or, in other words, we muſt firſt of all procure a remiſſion of the inflammatory ſymptoms by an antiphlogiſtic courſe, before we attempt to expel the virus that occaſioned them. And here, by way of illuſtration, I muſt beg to be indulged with a few words concerning the early and indiſcriminate uſe of mercurials in the virulent gonorrhœa.

Mercury properly prepared, and judiciouſly adminiſtered, is univerſally known to be the grand ſpecific in the venereal diſeaſe; but the competency of a remedy is of little avail, unleſs the practitioner be poſſeſſed of a ſufficient fund of knowledge to regulate the application

application of it. Mercury introduced into the body in any form, is found to act as a ſtimulus wherever its particles are conveyed. In the ſtomach and inteſtines, it proves emetic or purgative, and when it is received into the habit, it conſtantly accelerates the motion of the circulating fluids, and raiſes the pulſe. Theſe properties clearly evince, the futility and danger of having recourſe to this remedy, during the inflammatory ſtate of freſh-contracted venereal complaints. Hence, the exhibition of mercurials is not to be raſhly ventured on, in all ſtages of venereal diſorders; and they are very ſeldom required in the female gonorrhœa, unleſs ulceration has taken place, when the milder preparations are certainly neceſſary, to prevent the effects of abſorbtion.

Every objection that can be made to the uſe of mercury in the early, or inflammatory ſtages of venereal com-

plaints, may be urged, with equal juſtice, againſt the moſt famous quack medicines, which are known to be mercurial preparations: yet theſe are adminiſtered to all who can pay for them, without the leaſt regard to the ſtate of the diſeaſe, the age, ſex, or conſtitution of the patient; the degree of infection, or the part affected, and many other circumſtances that demand the utmoſt attention; from a neglect of which, the beſt remedy may rather increaſe the evil, than remove it, or perhaps bring on complaints of a more alarming nature than thoſe it was intended to relieve. Theſe conſiderations, important as they are, ſeldom have any weight with thoſe who ſtand in need of aſſiſtance, until dear-bought experience compels them to reflect on the folly of their conduct. I have met with ſome deplorable caſes, in conſequence of the improper uſe of mercurial pills. Huſbands, who have imprudently contracted

venereal

venereal infection, and communicated it to their wives, are too often aſhamed to apply to a regular practitioner; inſtead of which, they have recourſe to ſome noſtrum that has been pronounced infallible for curing every ſymptom of the diſeaſe, after taking it a certain number of days. This they ſwallow generally in a full doſe to make ſhort work of it, and oblige their unfortunate wives to do the ſame. The conſequences of ſuch a mode of treatment, are well known to the experienced part of the profeſſion, who are frequently called in when the inflammation has terminated in a gangrene, or the parts are eaten by deep ulcers, and the breath of the parties has that cadaverous ſtench attendant on a ſalivation, with other concomitants equally dangerous and diſagreeable. But, to return to the cure.

The inflammatory ſymptoms attendant on venereal infection commonly

give the firſt alarm. As ſoon as theſe appear, the patient muſt ſtrictly obſerve a cooling regimen, and avoid wine, ale, made-diſhes, and all ſalted or ſeaſoned meat. Her food ſhould conſiſt of light-puddings, broth, vegetables, milk, and ſuch things as are mild and eaſy of digeſtion. The drink may be barley-water, marſhmallow-tea, linſeed-tea, milk and water, or the emulſio communis, which is preferable to all other kinds of beverage. Moderate exerciſe is not prejudicial, unleſs the caſe is ſo particularly circumſtanced as to require the patient to be kept in a ſtate of reſt; but riding, and dancing, with whatever conſiderably increaſes the motion of the blood, muſt at all times be productive of inflammation, and for that reaſon ſhould be avoided.

Topical applications properly managed, will conſiderably promote and haſten the cure. The good effects attending

tending the uſe of remedies that can be applied immediately to the part affected, are ſufficiently known, and there is no reaſon in nature, why a treatment of this kind ſhould not prove as beneficial in venereal, as in other local diſorders. But though great advantages may be derived from topical remedies in the gonorrhœa, when uſed with diſcretion, evils of an equal magnitude, may follow the unſkilful application of them.

The external parts, and entrance of the vagina, ſhould be fomented and bathed three or four times a day, with warm water, milk and water, or a decoction of freſh mallow leaves. Theſe mild applications, which may be conveniently uſed with a ſponge, will procure eaſe, and an abatement of the tenſion and inflammation. Nor is it leſs needful to have recourſe to a careful ablution of the internal parts, in order to preſerve them from being excoriated

or ulcerated, as well as to prevent irritation, or aſſiſt in removing it when preſent. Emollient, or ſedative injections, ought therefore to be thrown up warm, twice or thrice a day, ſo as to cleanſe out the whole vaginal canal, and clear away the virulent ſanies that is continually ſecreted by the infected glandules. If, by a ſtrict obſervance of what has been juſt recommended, due attention be paid to cleanlineſs only, the virus will ſeldom or ever acquire that high degree of acrimony neceſſary to produce ulceration; conſequently, the danger of the poiſon being abſorbed, and received into the maſs of circulating humours, will be effectually removed, and that by the moſt ſimple remedies.

Cooling purges are proper from the beginning, and ought to be repeated at due intervals during the cure, but more frequently in the inflammatory ſtate of the

the diſorder, than afterwards. Theſe muſt be of the lenient, or gentle ſort, ſuch as an infuſion of tamarinds and ſena, manna, Rochelle, or Glauber's ſalts; and the doſe ſhould be ſo proportioned, as to paſs the inteſtines without any commotion; two or three ſtools being ſufficient. If the medicine operates in a greater degree, it is apt to bring on a teneſmus, and the conſequent irritation extending to the vagina, more than counterbalances the good effects of the remedy.

Mucilaginous ſubſtances, ſuch as gum arabic, or gum tragacanth, either alone, or with a proportion of nitre, according to the inflammatory diatheſis that prevails, may be taken freely, and often, in a draught of water, or any other diluting liquor. But if the ardor urinæ be conſiderable, with a conſtant ſtimulus, and inclination to make water, the nitre muſt be left out; and, under theſe circum-

circumſtances, clyſters of equal parts of olive-oil and warm water, frequently injected, will have a better effect than the mildeſt purgative given by the mouth, for very obvious reaſons.

When the inflammatory ſymptoms run high, and produce a quick and full, or a ſtrong pulſe, it may be neceſſary to take away a little blood, provided the patient be of a plethoric habit: but great care muſt be taken to diſcriminate between the conſequences of inflammation, and the effects of irritation. Delicate women are generally extremely ſuſceptible of pain. In ſuch ſubjects, a continued irritation conſtantly affects the pulſe; but here, evacuations are more likely to increaſe the irritability, than to remove its effects. Sedative applications to the affected parts, and opiates given internally, are the means by which we may, in this caſe, procure ſpeedy, and effectual relief.

By a ſtrict obſervance of the cooling regimen, and, at the ſame time, purſuing the antiphlogiſtic courſe of treatment recommended above, the inflammatory ſymptoms will ſpeedily give way, and the diſorder be oftentimes perfectly ſubdued; but ſhould the gonorrhœal diſcharge continue, with, or without ulceration, we may then, and not before, ſafely venture on aſtringent injections, and the grand antidote, mercury, ſhould it be found neceſſary to perfect the cure.

A great variety of ſubſtances enter into the compoſition of the injections proper for this ſtage of the gonorrhœa. Every practitioner has ſelected ſome, which he fancies of ſuperior efficacy to others; but as they are all poſſeſſed of a degree of aſtringency, and act by that quality alone, their real virtues will be found very little ſhort of each other; nor does mercury, topically applied in this

this diſeaſe, ſeem to inherit any ſpecific quality; it often increaſes irritation, and not infrequently cauſes a painful ſtimulus; and whenever, by this mode of application, it produces any good effects, they are to be attributed to the aſtringency it poſſeſſes in common with many other leſs corroſive ſubſtances. Whatever compoſition we make choice of, the great art conſiſts in nicely proportioning its ſtimulating, and aſtringent qualities, to the ſenſibility of the part it is intended to act on. Some women of a delicate frame, as was before obſerved, are ſo exquiſitely affected by a ſlight degree of pain, that what in others of a different habit, would ſcarcely produce the deſired effect, would in them, be productive of pain, inflammation, and other ſiniſter conſequences. Under theſe circumſtances, the only direction to be given, is, to conſider well the conſtitution, and habit of the patient, and firſt to make trial of the

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mildeſt remedies, proceeding gradatim, to ſuch as will anſwer the intended purpoſe.

If the external parts are ulcerated, we muſt continue our endeavours to avoid exciting pain, by applying ſuch dreſſings as will lay eaſy upon the ſores, and defend them from the air. Dry lint, mild digeſtives, and the ſaturnine cerate, and ointment, are well adapted for this purpoſe. It is needleſs to enlarge here on the topical treatment of venereal ulcers, ſince the directions relating to the management of ulcers in general, that have been given by the beſt writers on ſurgery, contain every information requiſite on this head.

When ulceration has taken place, and chancres are produced, it will be prudent, or rather abſolutely neceſſary to exhibit mercury in ſmall doſes, to prevent the effects of the virus being received

ceived into the ſyſtem. The dreadful apprehenſions formerly entertained of the deleterious effects of mercury, ſtill ſerve the purpoſes of intereſted, and deſigning people, but ſkilful practitioners have long ſince laid aſide thoſe fears, which reaſon and experience prove to be mere bugbears. Mercury is daily given to children of the tendereſt ages, with great ſucceſs in many diſorders; and when properly prepared, and judiciouſly adminiſtered (on which depends the ſucceſs), it will be attended with every advantage we can poſſibly expect from it. In ſhort, the more we conſider the effects of the venereal virus, when taken into the habit, the more we ſhall be confirmed in the opinion, that mercury is the nobleſt and ſafeſt remedy we are yet poſſeſſed of, for the cure of the moſt obſtinate venereal ſymptoms, whether they ariſe from a local, or general infection.

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The chymiſts have tortured mercury in a great variety of forms, but the moſt laboured among the acrid preparations, are, in moſt caſes, very inferior in effect to the milder ones. Such preparations as are eaſily ſoluble in the ſtomach, miſcible with the fluids, and enter the habit without exciting any commotion, or producing any ſenſible evacuation, are the fitteſt for our preſent purpoſe. Calomel, though much in uſe, is very uncertain in its effects, being too liable to run off by ſtool, or elſe to affect the mouth, even when given in the ſmalleſt doſes. Crude mercury, accurately extinguiſhed with mucilage of gum arabic, or thick honey, and made into pills, with a ſufficient quantity of liquorice powder, or bread, is as ſafe a preparation as any, and will be found ſuperior to moſt of thoſe that are in general uſe. When it has a tendency to ſtimulate the inteſtines, which however ſeldom happens, a ſmall quantity of the thebaic

extract

extract may be added to each pill. Crude mercury, by a careful diviſion of its particles with mucilage of gum arabic, may be ſuſpended in a watery vehicle. This forms a convenient preparation for ſome perſons, who cannot ſwallow any medicine in a ſolid form. There are others, whoſe ſtomachs, and inteſtines, are ſo extremely irritable, that the internal uſe of mercury, even in the mildeſt form, and ſmalleſt quantity, cannot be perſiſted in with ſafety. Fortunately for ſuch people, the external application of it, properly attended to, will anſwer the purpoſe. There are practitioners who prefer the introduction of mercury by friction, to any other method; but it is a very dirty remedy, and often produces a troubleſome and painful kind of eryſipelas, on the part where it has been rubbed: beſides, it requires more confinement than people in general chuſe to ſubject themſelves to.

In whatever form mercury is adminiſtered, its uſe muſt be perſiſted in as long as any virulency is ſuſpected to remain. That being ſubdued, the ulcers healed, and the running ſtopt, we may ſafely pronounce the patient cured. But ſhould any diſcharge remain, after the virus is perfectly deſtroyed, we muſt have recourſe to aſtringent injections, that will brace up the relaxed orifices of the mucous lacunæ, and reſtore them to an healthy ſtate.

It may be neceſſary to obſerve, that mercury, and aſtringent injections, are improper during the menſtrual diſcharge.

The foregoing general directions, are in a great meaſure applicable to every ſpecies of female gonorrhœa; but there remain to be conſidered ſome few remedies, proper for the relief of the moſt urgent, and diſtinguiſhing ſymptoms of

each particular ſpecies. Before I proceed to them, it may be proper to take notice of a ſymptom that is common to all.

BUBO.

AN inguinal bubo, is an inflammation and tumor of one or more of the lymphatic glands in the groin, proceeding from the abſorbtion of part of the venereal virus, by the lymphatic veins that lead through the glands; where the veſſels being conſiderably contracted in their diameters, impede the further progreſs of the virus; which having taken a ſeat in the gland, its ſtimulus preſently occaſions inflammation and tumor. The patient complains of a dull obtuſe pain and tenſion in the groin, and the glands may be felt ſtretching along like knotted cords. Sometimes there are ſeveral diſtinct ſwellings, which commonly approach each other

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as they increaſe, and at laſt uniting in one large tumor, proceed gradually to ſuppuration.

Venereal buboes are ſaid to be ſometimes merely the effect of irritation. Without abſolutely denying the fact, I may venture to affirm, that the matter diſcharged from a ſuppurated bubo, is conſtantly capable of communicating venereal infection; the reverſe of which would be true, were buboes produced without abſorbtion.

In the female ſex, a bubo is very rarely the only ſymptom of venereal infection, as ſometimes happens in males. I have never met with an inſtance of it.

Practitioners are divided in their opinions, reſpecting the treatment of buboes. Some, recommend their being brought to ſuppuration, whilſt others,

are for uſing every endeavour to diſperſe them. Having no mind to ſwell a page by recounting the arguments in ſupport of the different opinions, or to enter into a controverſy on the matter, I ſhall content myſelf, with briefly relating the mode of treatment I have followed for ſeveral years with good ſucceſs; which I ſhall be happy to relinquiſh at any time, when convinced of a better.

My conſtant aim in the management of buboes, as well as of every other venereal ſymptom, has been to prevent, or remove pain. A bubo, when ſuffered to proceed to ſuppuration, is attended through the whole proceſs with a very conſiderable degree of pain; and after the matter is let out by inciſion, cauſtic, or the burſting of the tumor, the cure is often protracted to a tedious length, in ſpite of our utmoſt endeavours to heal the ulcer; and after all,

the cicatrice remains an unſeemly memento for life, which is an object of no ſmall magnitude with the fair ſex.

When applied to in time, I always endeavour to diſperſe the tumor, and very ſeldom fail of ſucceeding. In order to effect this, the patient muſt obſerve a ſpare regimen, and take a cooling purge every ſecond or third day. Linen compreſſes, ſix or eight times doubled, expreſſed out of cold aqua vegeto-mineralis, ſhould be laid to the groin, and renewed as often, during the day, as they become warmed by the heat of the part. By this treatment, the pain will uſually abate in a ſhort time, and the tumor diminiſh. When ſuppuration has already began to take place in the tumor, a poultice of crum of bread, and the aqua vegeto-mineralis, as recommended by Monſ. Goulard, in his Remarques & obſervations ſur les maladies vénériennes, p. 99, applied warm,

and renewed twice or thrice a day, will have a better effect than the cold applications. But, in either caſe, if the tumor ſhould obſtinately remain in the ſame ſtate, after four or five days perſeverance in our attempts to diſperſe it, a vomit or two of ipecacuanha will make it give way. When the pain is gone off, and the ſwelling begins to decreaſe, I commonly adviſe the patient to take ſome mild mercurial preparation, in ſmall doſes, as has been recommended before. Formerly, I uſed mercurial frictions for the diſperſion of buboes, and other venereal tumors; but the little ſucceſs attending that practice, ſoon induced me to relinquiſh it. The beſt practitioners of the preſent day, never exhibit mercury in any ſhape, until the ſwelling and inflammatory ſymptoms abate.

If a bubo is ſo far advanced towards ſuppuration, that its diſperſion cannot be

be undertaken with any proſpect of ſucceſs, it muſt be brought to maturity as quickly as poſſible, by gentle means. A bread and milk poultice, is the eaſieſt prepared, and one of the beſt applications for this purpoſe. If the tumor ſuppurates kindly, it may be ſuffered to burſt of itſelf; but if the matter points in different places, as is frequently the caſe, a cauſtic ſhould be laid on, which is infinitely preferable to the knife in theſe caſes, carrying leſs terror with it, and producing a more benign ulcer, by diſſolving the intervening indurated parts. In whatever way a bubo is opened, a ſlight mercurial courſe is generally uſeful, to expedite the cure of the ulcer, as well as to prevent the effects of abſorbtion; but this rule is not without an exception. There are caſes, in which mercury is not to be depended on, nay, in which it will prove highly prejudicial to the patient. People of a ſcorbutic habit, and ſuch as have the craſis

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of their blood broken down, and their fluids in a ſemi-putrid ſtate, by intemperance, or a variety of other cauſes, are improper ſubjects for mercurials of any kind. Buboes, and indeed all venereal ulcers in ſuch patients, muſt be brought to a ſtate of healing by a liberal uſe of the bark; and ſometimes we may find it neceſſary to join opium to it. When the ulcer is incarned, and inclinable to heal, if we have doubts of any latent virus, mercurials may be adminiſtered with caution.

CURE OF THE FIRST SPECIES OF FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

FEMALES, from the nature of their conformation, are fit ſubjects for topical treatment, in the cure of the gonorrhœa; and in this ſpecies of the diſeaſe, great advantages are to be obtained by a ſkilful uſe of injections. If the virus has ulcerated

ulcerated the external parts, or the entrance of the vagina, ſponges, wet with proper remedies, can be readily applied to the pudenda, and as eaſily borne in the vagina; but no particular directions are required here, as the foregoing general method of cure, comprehends every thing neceſſary to be attended to in this place.

CURE OF THE SECOND SPECIES OF FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

THE inflammation and ſwelling of the meatus urinarius, is one of the moſt diſtreſſing ſymptoms attendant on the virulent gonorrhœa in females; and it occurs ſo frequently, that ſome have ſuppoſed it to be the only pathognomonic ſign of venereal infection. In this inſtance, the patient muſt ſtrictly obſerve a cooling regimen in diet and medicine. The uſe of emollient fomentations

mentations is clearly indicated; and when the pain and tenſion are extreme, inſtant relief may be obtained by applying a poultice made of bread and milk, with, or without, a portion of linſeed flour; which muſt be laid on warm, and renewed three or four times a day. This ſhould be ſupported by a proper bandage, and uſed as long as any inflammation remains. It ought to be large enough to cover the pudenda entirely; and may be commodiouſly applied in a linen bag, for the convenience of ſlipping it aſide as occaſion requires. Simple as this remedy may ſeem, it will always be found ſerviceable; and in the worſt caſes, it will often relax the part, and remove the ſuppreſſion of urine, like a charm. It is neceſſary here, to be cautious of aſtringents, until after the tenſion and inflammation are perfectly ſubdued.

CURE OF THE THIRD SPECIES OF FEMALE GONORRHOEA.

THE chief curative indications in this ſpecies of female gonorrhœa, are, to ſubdue the inflammation, and to remove the ſpaſmodic contraction of the urethra, and neck of the bladder, with its conſequences, pain, ſtrangury, and, ſometimes, total retention of urine. The inflammatory ſymptoms are to be treated as in the foregoing ſpecies; but the irritation is to be allayed, and the ſpaſm removed, by the immediate exhibition of anodynes. The ſovereign powers of opium, are in no caſe ſo ſpeedily and happily experienced, as in that under conſideration; but it muſt be obſerved, that when opiates are given, either to mitigate an exceſs of pain, or to ſuppreſs ſpaſms, the doſes muſt be proportioned to the urgency or violence of the diſorder. The ſpecific

quantity neceſſary to be given to procure relief, cannot by any means be aſcertained, but muſt depend on the judgment of the practitioner, who will regulate the doſes according to the effect they produce on the patient.

In order to finiſh the ſubject, there remains only to obſerve, that the cure of the virulent gonorrhœa may be as ſafely accompliſhed in pregnant women, as in others, and by the ſame means; but it is neceſſary to be rather more cautious reſpecting the uſe of mercurials.

FINIS.